

Abstract

Main objective.

The main aim of the research was to describe agriculture practices, food security and nutritional status of children under in Kateta sub county where malnutrition is on the increase among children.

The influence of human capital as an intervening variable in terms of the extension workers and household heads is capacity in terms of knowledge and skills plays a role in nutritional status of children and therefore very critical in this research.

Methodology.

The methodology employed in this research involved the use of structured questionnaires with both closed and open ended questions which were administered to respondents from sampled households.

The anthropometric data for children under five was analyzed using the Epi- info 2012 version enabled the generation of Z scores standard deviations used to provide a direct assessment of malnutrition among the age group.

Key informant interviews were conducted with professionals in the fields of agriculture and health and helped to enrich the study especially on recommendations for action.

Results.

The main findings for the research include: the average households land holding is low at 1-3 acres yet there is also underutilization and the contribution of production to food is equally low yet there is competition of use of food for consumption and income which is used for other needs; households' involvement in modern agriculture practices is low and traditional practices dominate in the sub-county; children at the age of 0-11 months are more affected by underweight while children at the age of 36- 47 months are more affected by stunting ; there is lack of joint planning between the agriculture and health personnel in order to improve nutritional status of children under five and education levels fairly are good and fairly good and provide a potential for improvement in agricultural practices hence food security and nutrition status.

Conclusion and recommendations.

In conclusion, poor agricultural practice have contributed to food insecurity in Kateta sub county and this has negative influence on the nutritional status of the under fives.

The study recommends thus; joint planning for agriculture by agriculture and health professionals so as to improve on diets, this is in agreement with the recommendation of global food policy report (2011); promote adoption of good agricultural practices; village health teams should handle nutrition support services for children under five through education; improve agricultural extension services; support adequate planning on food utilization.